

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 IO-14 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

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R 300456Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9361

INFO CINCPAC

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 20056

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, TH

SUBJECT: THAILAND PLANS CEASE FIRE WITH INSURGENTS

1. DEFENSE MINISTER DAWEE, ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS REPORTS, OF 25 DECEMBER 73, STATED THAT THE DEFENSE MINISTRY PLANS TO ANNOUNCE A ONE-MONTH "CEASE-FIRE" WITH COMMUNIST INSURGENTS IN THAILAND.

2. COLONEL PRADIT, G-3 COMMUNIST SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS COMMAND (CSOC), CONFIRMED TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER DECEMBER 27 THAT A PLAN FOR A UNILATERAL CEASE FIRE IS BEING WORKED ON AT CSOC. PRADIT SAID THAT THE RTG CEASE FIRE OFFER, IF APPROVED BY THE CABINET AND THE PRIME MINISTER WILL:

A) DECLARE A TWO MONTH HALT TO ALL OFFENSIVE ACTIONS AGAINST THE INSURGENTS, STARTING EARLY 1974, AND

B) PROVIDE LASTING BENEFITS FOR INDIVIDUALS RETURNING TO GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL.

3. THIS OFFER, ACCORDING TO PRADIT, WAS INITIATED BY DAWEE AND IS BEING PREPARED AT THIS TIME BECAUSE "CONDITIONS HAVE CHANGED" AND BECAUSE THE ADVENT OF A NEW YEAR PROVIDES SUITABLE
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ATMOSPHERE FOR SUCH A GESTURE. CSOC PLANS ARE BEING READIED

TO COVER INSURGENT AREAS BY LEAFLET AND RADIO, AND AN ALL OUT PSYCHOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN TO INDUCE DEFECTIONS. LEGAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN HANDLING INDIVIDUALS CHARGED WITH CRIMINAL ACTS APPEAR TO BE THE MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCK TO GRANTING FULL AMNESTY TO ALL DISSIDENTS. PRADIT COMMENTED THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT ANY RANKING DEFECTIONS FROM THE CT WOULD OCCUR DURING THE CEASE FIRE, BUT THAT SOME LOW LEVEL RETURNEES COULD BE EXPECTED. THE MAIN BENEFIT TO THE RTG WOULD BE "POLITICAL", HE SAID, WITH THE RTG TAKING THE INITIATIVE IN SEEKING A WAY OUT OF A PROTRACTED STRUGGLE WITH THE COMMUNISTS.

4. LTG SAIYUD, CHAIRMAN OF THE CSOC COORDINATING COMMITTEE, COMMENTED TO AN EMBASSY OFFICER DECEMBER 27 THAT ALTHOUGH THERE MIGHT BE AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN RTG CEASE-FIRE, HE DOUBTED THAT THE CT WOULD GO ALONG.

5. COMMENT: PRADIT IS PROBABLY CORRECT IN SEEING THE BENEFITS TO THE RTG IN A CEASE FIRE ANNOUNCEMENT TO BE PRIMARILY PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL. HOWEVER, WITHHOLDING OFFENSIVE ACTIONS COULD PROVIDE THE INSURGENTS WITH TWO MONTHS IN WHICH THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO RECRUIT, TRAIN AND BUILD RESERVE FOOD STOCKS UNDER SAFER CONDITIONS THAN THEY NOW ENJOY.
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